

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A server for managing the retail sales of a product across a communication network comprising:

retail sales state management means for managing the retail sales state information of said a product, wherein the retail sales state information of the product comprises a history of retail sales of the product including a purchase time and purchase price for each sale of a product unit of the product;

price setting means for dynamically setting the a current retail price of said product in accordance with rules that specify conditions and parameters to determine the retail price of the product and to determine when to change the retail price and an amount of change in retail price of the product based on and the retail sales state information of said product and in accordance with the current actual retail sales status information of said product when managed by said retail sales state management means; and

product information provision means for, upon the receipt of an information request regarding said product from a user via said communication network, furnishing the user with the product information concerning said product and said current retail price of said product[,] as dynamically set by said price setting means at the time said information request is received.

2. (Currently Amended) The server according to claim 1, further comprising:

price trend information provision means for generating, in accordance with said current actual retail sales status information state of said product, trend information concerning trends affecting changes to the current retail price the changes of said price of said product, wherein said trend information is at least a portion of the product information that is furnished to the user in response to said information request and for furnishing said information to said information request transmission source.

3. (Currently Amended) The server according to claim 1, wherein the rules specify conditions and parameters for changing the retail price of the product according to a number of product units sold, wherein said price setting means can dynamically set a

current retail price for said product by using evaluating said rules using relevant information from the retail sales state information or from the current retail sales status information or both, where the retail price of the product increases as the number of product units sold increases and where the retail price of the product decreases as the number of product units sold decreases, based on said retail sales state of said product, according to which the price is increased as the number of product units sold rises or decreased as the number of product units sold falls.

4. (Cancelled).

5. (Currently Amended) A server for charging for and providing digital content via a communication network comprising:

sales state management means[,] for managing the sales state information regarding sale of said digital content, wherein the sales state information of the digital content comprises a history of accesses of the digital content product including a time and retail charge for each access of a unit of the digital content;

price setting means[,] for dynamically changing a setting a current retail charge for accessing said digital content in accordance with that specify conditions and parameters to determine the retail charge of the digital content and to determine when to change the retail charge and an amount of change in retail charge of the digital content based on and the sales state information of said digital content and in accordance with current sales status information said sales state of said digital content, which is managed by said sales state management means; and

information provision means for presenting to an information request transmission source, upon the receipt of an information request regarding said digital content from a user via said communication network, furnishing the user with the digital content information concerning said digital content and said current retail charge for accessing said digital content that is as dynamically set by said price setting means at the time said information request is received.

6. (Currently Amended) The server according to claim 5, further comprising:

price trend information provision means, for generating, in accordance with said current sales status information ~~sales state of said digital content, trend information~~ concerning trends affecting changes to the current retail charge ~~the changing of said charge for accessing said digital content wherein said trend information is at least a portion of the digital content information that is furnished to the user in response to said information request and for furnishing said information to said information request transmission source.~~

7. (Currently Amended) The server according to claim 5, wherein the rules specify conditions and parameters for changing the retail charge according to a number of accesses of said digital content, wherein said price setting means dynamically sets said current retail charge for accessing said digital content by evaluating said rules using relevant information from the sales state information or from the current sales status information or both, where the retail charge for accessing the digital content increases as the number of accesses of said digital content increases and where the retail charge decreases as the number of accesses of the digital content decreases ~~in accordance with rules and said sales state of said digital content and according to which said charge for an access is increased when the number of accesses of said digital content rises or is reduced when the number of accesses falls.~~

8. (Currently Amended) The server according to claim 5, wherein the rules specify conditions and parameters for changing the retail charge according to ranking information regarding a popularity or evaluation of the digital content, wherein said price setting means can dynamically set the current retail charge for accessing said digital content by evaluating said rules using the ranking information, as well as relevant information from the sales state information or from the current sales status information or both, wherein the retail charge increases as a ranking of the digital content increases and wherein the retail charge decreases as the ranking of the digital content decreases. ~~wherein said price setting means sets said charge for accessing said digital content in accordance with rules, which is based on said sales state of said digital content, according to which said charge for an access is increased when the rank awarded said digital~~

~~content, which is consonant with the popularity or the evaluation of said digital content, is incremented, or said charge for an access is reduced when said rank awarded said digital content is decremented.~~

9. ~ 19 (Canceled)

20. (New) The server according to claim 3, wherein the rules specify conditions and parameters for increasing the retail price by a specified amount when a specified number of products units are sold, and decreasing the retail price by a specified amount when a specified number of products units have not been sold within a specified period of time.

21. (New) The server according to claim 3, wherein the rules specify conditions and parameters for increasing the retail price by a specified amount when a specified number of products units are sold within a specified period of time, and decreasing the retail price by a specified amount when a specified number of products units have not been sold within a specified period of time.

22. (New) The server according to claim 1, wherein the rules specify conditions and parameters for changing the retail price according to ranking information regarding the product, wherein said price setting means can dynamically set the current retail price for the product by evaluating the rules using the ranking information, as well as relevant information from the retail sales state information or from the current retail sales status information or both, where the retail price of the product increases as a product ranking increases and where the retail price of the product decreases as the product ranking decreases.

23. (New) The server according to claim 22, wherein the ranking information is based on a retail sales ranking of the product or a popularity ranking of the product.

24. (New) The server according to claim 7, wherein the rules specify conditions and parameters for increasing the retail charge by a specified amount when the digital content has been accessed a specified number of times, and decreasing the retail charge by a specified amount when the digital content has not been accessed a minimum number of times within a specified period of time.

25. (New) The server according to claim 7, wherein the rules specify conditions and parameters for increasing the retail charge by a specified amount when a specified number of accesses of the digital content occur within a specified period of time, and decreasing the retail charge by a specified amount when a specified number of accesses of the digital content have not occurred within a specified period of time.